

*The Exalted Hopes of the Righteous, at,
and after Death, considered.*

IN A
SERMON,

Occasioned by the
Decease of that Faithful Servant of CHRIST,
Mr. *Richard Drinkwater.*

PREACHED AT
CHICHESTER,
APRIL 24, 1743.

To which is added, A
POSTSCRIPT.

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PROV. xiv. 32.

— *The Righteous hath Hope in his Death.*

FUNERAL Discourses can never be thought of Service to the Dead, but are especially intended for the Instruction of the Living. Though we take Occasion sometimes to mention the adorning Virtues, the high Attainments of those departed, yet even that is done directly for our own profit; that the living may lay to heart their excellent Example, and become Followers of those who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.

To that End, our worthy Brother, on whose Occasion we are now assembled, deserves to be had in everlasting Remembrance: *his Faith* we ought to follow, and *consider the End*, the Usefulness of *his exemplary Conversation*. We can't prevent a deep Concern on the Loss of a Person of so great Value and Usefulness; however, it serves to alleviate our Grief and Trouble, when we consider, that *the Righteous hath Hope in his Death.*

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You need not be told, that these are the Words of *Solomon*, the wisest Man of that Age; a Person well versed in all the Accomplishments of useful Learning; one of large Experience; but in early Life sadly betray'd by the Riches and Grandeur so fatal among the eastern Monarchs.

The Book of *Ecclesiastes*, however, is a standing Evidence of the Penitence and Reformation of his later Days. He there lays down as an effectual Expedient to the young and profligate, their fixing this Thought within their cheerful active Breasts, * *that for all the vices of Life, God will certainly bring them into Judgment.* Nor is there any part of Holy Scripture, as I remember, more serious, awful, and instructive, than that with which this Book is concluded: † *Let us, saith he, hear the Conclusion of the whole Matter;* or, this is the Sum of all I have been saying; *Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of Man, i. e. his incumbent Duty, and his highest Interest; for God will bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* To obey the Will of God, as declared in the Gospel of his Son, is certainly our most important Concern; our eternal Welfare, ‡ *through the Redemption which is in Jesus Christ,* depends thereon. To stand in the

* Eccles. xi. 9. † Eccles. xii. 13, 14. ‡ Rom. iii. 24.

awful Judgment; to be pardoned, accepted, and glorified at that Day, which determines our everlasting Existence, must be of the highest Importance imaginable.

And this seems to be the prevailing Sentiment in our Text: However, we shall take it in that Light and View. The Masculine Gender, and the Singular Number, are here used by *Solomon*, to give Beauty and Spirit to the Sentence; but the apparent Sense of the Passage is, that all righteous Persons, of either Sex, have alike, *Hope in their Death*.

From these Words, then, we have Opportunity given, to discourse upon the following Points.

I. Upon the common Calamity here supposed to overtake the best of Men; namely, Death.

II. Upon what goes to the Character of a righteous Person? And,

III. Upon the Felicities such, at Death, have Ground to hope for? When we have said something on these, we shall proceed to a suitable Application, and conclude with a short Account of our deceased Brother.

I. We are here, in the first Place, put in mind of the common Calamity; of what
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will, sooner or later, be the Lot even of the best of Men, *i. e.* *Death*. In the fatal Hour the Righteous hath Hope of Mercy and Favour, but no possible Hope to escape the Grave.

I should think there was no need to tell you what is meant by the Word *Death*, or indeed, what it is, in Reality, to die. Every Spectacle of Mortality, every breathless Friend we have at any time attended to *the House appointed for all the living*, plainly teach us to *know our End*.

Death is the Disunion of Soul and Body; thence necessarily ensues the utter Dissolution of our visible Frame. Now thus to die, exhibits to us several very useful and instructive Lessons, worthy our most devout and serious Attention.

Death separates us at once and forever, from all our worldly Enjoyments, from every Advantage of life: thence we learn, the Uncertainty, the perishing Nature of every Dependence here below. Death drags us away from our most endearing Friends, from all the pleasing Opportunities of Society and Conversation; by which * *Counsel is sweeten'd*, and the House of God made delightful. Hence we are taught the Value of our passing Moments, how carefully we should improve every Season of Grace and Knowledge; and con-

* Psal. lv. 14.

stantly observe that Precept, * *forsake the foolish, and live and walk in the way of Understanding.* Death fullies all our Beauty, it casteth us down to Corruption and Rottenness. Nature shrinks at the Thought, esteems it as the greatest of all Enemies and Evils. They, then, who talk of Death with a careless Indifference, only declare thereby, that their Thoughts have not been sufficiently taken up with serious Contemplations of its awful Consequences.

For, besides its taking us away from all the Satisfactions of Life, which to the wise and virtuous, in Health and Vigour, are not despisable, Death also fixes our everlasting State. *Solomon* well observed, † that there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave, whither we are going. So far as has been revealed, and we can pretend to judge, this World is the only place of our Trial and Probation; in the next World we are to expect our final, our unchanging Doom. Death then is the closing up of our Accounts; 'tis the Conclusion of our Stewardship; as we die, so shall we arise, and in the same Estate must we appear before the solemn and awful Tribunal; where eternal Life, or intense Misery, will be our unavoidable Portion. There is therefore, too much depends upon our Death, that it should be esteem'd a Trifle: No

* Prov. ix. 6.

Man, with any Wisdom, or Safety, or Consistence, then, can hastily incline to die, or so much as entertain a comfortable Thought about it, till some Assurance is gained of that good Estate which *Balaam* so much desired, namely, * to die the death of the Righteous, and have his last End, or his Reward, to be like the righteous Man's.

Now Death; thus Awful; thus Important, will be the certain Fate of all, both Good and Bad. In this War, none of us have the least ground to hope for any Escape or Discharge †. *The Fathers where are they? And the Prophets? The best of Men? Do they live forever?* O no, they are, long since, dissolved in Death. To the thoughtless, the unprepared dying, though thus certain and unavoidable, must be very terrifying and dreadful: It can be tolerable only to the Wise and Virtuous; as to such Persons indeed, its Sting and Terror are well removed: It can hurt only the Body, while *the Soul enters into Peace, and rests in its Uprightness.*

Now, if Death be thus our common, our unavoidable Calamity: If it be thus Important, and of so very different Effects, as it meets with Persons prepared, or unprepared to die; it is certainly hereupon highly proper, that we go on to enquire into the Character of those

* Numb. xxiii. 10.

† Zach. i. 5.

who can with Safety, expect to *depart in Peace*.

II. This is the second Part of our present Work. The *Righteous* hath hope in his Death. When the pale Messenger approaches to take away a wicked Man, all his Dependencies fail : He lays hold on Peace, in vain : He is beset, behind and before, with Shame and Trouble : But in that trying Hour, the joyful Expectations of the Righteous, increase and comfort them.

But who *are* these ? How are the Righteous known and distinguished from the rest of the World ? This is an important Enquiry, deserving due Consideration. To resolve the same, let it observed ; that the Term Righteous here, is to be understood in its most general and comprehensive Sense : Far from being confined to any single Virtue, it includes and supposes rather, the whole compass of virtuous Action. It denotes a Person, upright and honest, inwardly Good, and Godly, in contradistinction to those who are corrupt and sinful : So the Case plainly appears from the Words preceding our Text : *The Wicked is driven away in his Wickedness ; but the Righteous hath Hope in his Death*. To be Wicked, is to have cast off the Fear of God ; to follow the corrupt Desires of the Mind ; to disserve our Generation ; to abandon Wisdom's Ways, for those of Sin and Folly.

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On the other Hand, therefore, to be Righteous, supposes a constant Conformity to the Precepts of Purity, of Truth, of Equity and Goodness. A righteous Man, according to the Prophet *Micah* * is one *who does justly, loves Mercy, and walks humbly with God*: In the Account of St. Peter †, *he fears God and works Righteousness*; in Opposition to those who only talk of the Duties they owe to Justice, Truth, and Fidelity, but neglect their Practice. ‡ *And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the Things which I say?*

A righteous Person is active, watchful, and circumspect; and, as such, gains a Proficiency in Zeal and Faithfulness to God; in Equity and Goodness to his Fellow-Creatures; and in the prudent Regulation of his own Appetites and Passions.

Under the *Christian* Dispensation it belongs to the Character of a righteous Man; to believe in, to accept of, and, with great Uprightness, to obey the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son and Sent of God; to comply with the Terms of Salvation as propounded in the Gospel, so as to *adorn the Doctrine of God his Saviour*.

Thus, to be *righteous*, in the comprehensive Sense, is much the same as to be good, or holy, or godly, or faithful. St. *Paul*, indeed, once, on an Argument very particular, uses the

* Mic. vi. 8. † Acts x. 35. ‡ Luke vi. 46.

Words, *righteous Man* in a restrain'd Sense, as distinct from one singularly good and charitable: But it is a Rule we can't easily misinterpret, that whenever any *single Word* is used to set forth the personal Character of a Person, it then comprehends all his commendable Qualities. Instances need not be multiplied in so clear a Case, and which your own Meditations may easily supply: I shall mention one, as exactly suiting the Affair before us. It is said of *Zachariah* and *Elizabeth*, that *they were both righteous before God*: Now, how did this appear? How came it to be evident, that they were acceptably righteous in the Sight of God? The next Words declare this. 'Twas apparent from their *walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless*; that is, they made it the constant Care of their Lives, to worship, obey, and glorify God in every Instance of Duty and Obligation, to the Extent of their Knowledge and Capacity. This is all the great God expects, and 'tis what, through the Mercy of the new Covenant, he will graciously accept.

The aforementioned Persons are said to be *blameless*; that is, I conceive, in the Sight of Men, who observed their upright and exemplary Behaviour; not blameless in the Sight of God, who beholds the Secrets of every Heart. They had, no doubt, their Imperfections and Frailties, like other righteous Persons; but being humble and conscientious, **JEHOVAH** accepted

cepted them to Mercy and Favour, as he does all such *in every Nation*.

When therefore *Hope in Death* is appropriated to *the Righteous*, 'tis the Intention of the wise Man to denote thereby a Person who, in the general Bent and Tenour of his Life, is humble, holy, upright, just, and faithful; who does what he can to keep a *Conscience void of Offence toward God and toward Men*, as St. Paul declares * was his constant *Exercise* and Resolution. This also, I am well satisfied; was the daily Endeavour of our deceased Friend, and it ought to be our Concern, every one of us; for on this we may certainly depend, that no Christian, who lives in any known, wilful Sin, whether of Omission or Commission, can ever be accounted righteous in the Estimation either of the Law or the Gospel. That we may then have *good Hope, through Grace*, of Mercy from God in Christ, may *die the Death of the Righteous*, let us constantly address the Heavenly Throne, and † walk before the Lord in *Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life*.

III. We now proceed to enquire what, at Death, the Righteous have ground to hope for? The good Christian, it seems, has something in Expectation at, and after his Dissolution. In that gloomy Season, when all the pleasing Views of bad Men expire and die, then, as I said, do the Hopes of the good and holy, revive, and support them. But what kind of

* Acts xxiv. 16.

† Luke i. 75.

Hopes may the Righteous entertain? What are they encouraged to expect, on their Departure out of Life? This will appear by the following Particulars.

I. The Righteous have Hope, at Death, to remain Favourites of the divine Mercy and Compassion. Having lived in Obedience to the Will and Laws of Christ, * *to the Praise of him who called them out of Darkness into his marvellous Light*, they have good Assurance of being † *accepted in the Beloved*. The Christian, whose Heart has been humble, upright, and faithful to God, has good Ground thus to reason and conclude, on viewing the Promises of the Gospel. “ The Great JEHOVAH hitherto has been my Strength and Refuge; as I was cast upon his Care from my very Birth; and as he has fed me all my Life long, and followed me with Mercy and Loving Kindness, so certainly he will not utterly reject me now, under my greatest Trial: I depend he will not; and therefore I will, with great Assurance, say with David ‡; *Though I wander through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil; for thou art with me, thy Rod and Staff shall comfort me.*”

And this is no inconsiderable Part of the Believer's Hope, that he dies in the Arms of Redeeming Love, can confide in the everlasting Compassion and Mercy of God.

* 1 Pet. ii. 9. † Ephes. i. 6. ‡ Psal. xxiii. 4.

II. A righteous Man securely hopes, on his Departure hence, to leave his Temptations, and Cares, and Trials, and Afflictions, all behind him. In this Life, and, more or less, all our Life long, we are surrounded with Snares and Dangers. We are rarely easy, seldom safe. Though we are *of few Days*, yet oftentimes, those Days are * *full of Trouble*. Now at the Grave, where the Wicked *lie down in Sorrow*, all the Afflictions of the Righteous cease, and are forgotten. *There, as Job speaks, † the Wicked cease from troubling, and the Weary be at Rest; there the Prisoners rest together, they hear not the Voice of the Oppressor.* So *Isaiah, ‡ The Righteous*, seemingly at least, *perisheth, but no Man layeth it to Heart; and merciful Men are taken away, none considering that the Righteous are removed from the Evil to come; or rather, as the Margin, are taken away from that which is evil: Yea, 'tis added, they shall enter into Peace, they rest in their Beds*, are like those who are at Ease from Labour, *each one walking in his Uprightness.*

The Wicked here, take Delight to heap Afflictions upon the Righteous, they often despise their Zeal, and Faith, and Piety; but hereafter, the Scene will greatly change, as the Author of the *Book of Wisdom* has most elegantly expressed it ||; when those, overgrown at present with Infidelity and Prophaneness, *groaning*

* *Job* xiv. 1.† *Job* iii. 17, 18.‡ *Isa.* lvii. 1, 2.|| *Chap.* v. 3, 4, 5.

through Anguish of Spirit, shall say within themselves, speaking of the righteous Man, This is he whom we had some time in Derision, and made a Proverb of Reproach: We Fools accounted his Life Madness, and his End to be without Honour; How is he number'd among the Children of God, and his Lot is among the Saints.

And this the Spirit of God has told us, for our Encouragement and Support, * that, *dying in the Lord, the Virtuous and Holy are thenceforth blessed, they rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them to their Father's House.*

III. Again, In the Third Place, the Righteous have Hope at Death, as to their better Part, to remove, in Triumph, *to the Spirits of just Men made perfect. While the Dust returns to the Earth as it was, saith Solomon concerning Death †, the Spirit returns to God who gave it. ‡ The Body without the Spirit is dead.* Upon giving up the Ghost (the ancient Method of expressing the Departure of the Soul out of the Body) the Faithful always hoped for a Remove to some better Place: Being gathered to their People, they earnestly expected to enjoy the Company of the Blessed, the Meek, and Holy, who were gone before them. This blessed Hope, *full of Immortality*, made Stephen so ready to say, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit.* This Thought induced St.

* Rev. xiv. 13.

† Acts xxiv. 15.

‡ 2 Cor. iv. 14.

Paul § to account himself, *absent from the Lord*, all the while he *was present in the Body*, and to desire a *Dismission from it*, that he *might be present with the Lord*; which he esteemed, *much better* for himself, than to abide longer in this troublesome World. This Hope of Immortality, was what inclined *Socrates*, that incomparable Pagan, to rejoice with his happy Friends, when drinking the deadly Poison in obedience to his unrighteous Sentence *, and so careful to improve his last Moments, by instructing and comforting those about him, in the steady pursuits of Wisdom and Virtue: His Hope, I mean, of a sudden Removal to the World of Spirits, to the Society of the Wise and Virtuous, to a State of Peace, of Purity, of Joy and Rest. But neither does the Hope of righteous *Christians*, stop here, for, beside the Immortal Felicities of the intermediate State,

IV. They expect, and wait for, a happy and glorious Resurrection. This the Gospel has clearly and fully taught, beyond what had been done under the former Dispensation. *That there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead* †, both of the *Just and Unjust*, our Saviour, has most expressly declared. *The Hour is com-*

§ 2 Cor. v. 6, 8.

* He was condemned to die, for disowning the *Athenian Idols*, and believing in the one supreme *Jehovah*.

† *Acts* xxiv. 14, 15.

ing when all, who are in the Graves, shall hear his Voice, and come forth; they who have done Good, shall rise to Life, and they who have done Evil shall rise to Condemnation. This Truth is now fully confirmed to us by the Resurrection of our Lord himself already from the Dead; as the Apostle well observes, * *He who raised up the Lord Jesus, will raise up us also by him.* † *Because I live, ye shall live also.* The Righteous then depend upon receiving again their Bodies, raised to Immortality ‡, in which they suffered, and perform'd their Services and Labours of Faith and Love, of Piety and Virtue. By being united to Bodies incorruptible, powerful, and glorious; they depend on being rendered capable of all kinds of pure and manly Felicity, with their glorified Lord and Saviour. A Resurrection to an immortal incorruptible State, of unfading Youth and Vigour, serves much to enhance the Hope of the Righteous. But what renders the same compleat and perfect, is,

V. Their Dependence on the Joys and Riches of the immortal World. The *Elect*,

* 2 Cor. iv. 14. † John xiv. 19.

‡ Some good *Christians*, I know, question the Immortality and separate Existence of the Soul, upon the Dissolution of the Body. To such I would recommend reading the profound Dr. *Samuel Clark*, who, in his Letters to Mr. *Dodwel*, Mr. *Colins*, Mr. *Leibnitz*, and other his inestimable Works, has, I think, fully cleared up that most desirable Point, not only from the Holy Scriptures, and the Primitive Writers; but from Reason, from the Nature and Truth of Things.

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by whom, in the sacred Writings, are always meant, the humble, diligent, faithful Servants of Christ, * *are begotten again by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, to the lively Hope of an Inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, which fadeth not away, but is reserved in Heaven for them.* Such Persons, as St. Peter adds for their present Satisfaction, Verse 5. *are kept by the Power of God, through Faith, through a steady Dependance on his Mercy, Protection, and Goodness, unto Salvation.* Those holy Christians who *commit the keeping of their Souls to God, in well doing,* may safely trust in him, not only as their merciful Creator, but as their Support and Strength. Now, saith St. Paul, † *to them who by a patient Continuance in well doing seek for Glory, Honour, and Immortality, on them shall be conferr'd eternal Life;* a Life, as he proceeds to describe it, full of Splendor, Dignity, and Peace.

To be sure, the Felicities of the future World are not at present, with Compleatness, to be conceived by finite Minds. ‡ *Beloved, saith St. John, now we are the Sons of God; and though it doth not fully appear what we shall be, yet this we know, that when he, or rather, when it appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

The faithful, the just, the holy Christian, will then be like unto God; that is, in some Respects, and to some Degree. They will be

* 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

† 1 John iii. 2.

like to God in Immortality ; they die no more, as our Lord speaks of those who will, by Grace, *be accounted worthy of that World* ; * *they are the Children of God, being Children of the Resurrection.*

They will be like to God, in the Enjoyment of an uninterrupted Felicity. The Joys into which they enter, are *the Joys of the Lord* ; permanent, spiritual, and uncloying Joys ; such as agree to the most refined Nature, and suit the most exalted State. † *Then shall the Righteous shine forth in the Kingdom of their Father.* To his faithful Followers, whose Righteousness far exceeded that of the Scribes and Pharisees, our Lord thus declares ; *Great will be your Reward in Heaven*, himself being ascended thither, as *their Harbinger, to prepare Mansions of Glory* for them.

Perhaps the Faithful may then also be thought like unto God, in the Exercises of perfect Holiness, and in high Degrees of Wisdom and Knowledge. No doubt, as our Reward is preparing in Heaven for us, nothing can be wanted to compleat our Happiness, nor to secure and exalt our Perfection in every possible Degree. ‡ *In thy Presence is Fulness of Joy, at thy Right Hand are Pleasures for evermore. As for me, I will behold thy Face in Righteousness ; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy Likeness.*

* Luke xx. 35, 36.
and Psalm xvii. 15.

† Mat. xiii. 43.

‡ Psalm xvi. 11.

Now, these are the noble Views, the exalted Expectations of the Righteous, at, and after Death. They hope, though they die, to continue Objects of the Divine Mercy and Acceptance; they depend on leaving their Cares, and Sorrows, and Temptations, all behind them; they expect an immediate Remove to the Spirits of just Men made perfect; after that, to be reunited with their Bodies, made immortal and glorious; and so to enjoy an eternal Life of rich Felicity, in the Heavenly World above. And thus having considered the Points proposed; our common Calamity, *Death*; the true Character of a *righteous* Person; and what such may safely *hope* for, when their *Flesh and Heart shall fail*;

What lies next before us is, to make a profitable Application.

I. Then, Have the Righteous Hope even in Death itself? And is this the Happiness *only* of such as obey and reverence the Lord their God? Hence let us all examine and *prove our own Work,* so as that we may have rejoicing in ourselves, and not in another, since every Man shall bear his own Burden.* Let us, then, seriously enter upon the following Questions, each for himself. What have I been doing in the World? Have the Love, and Fear, and Service of God, been my Care and Study? Is my Delight in the Law of the Lord? Or, is my Soul straying

* Gal. vi. 4, 5.

from God in the bye Paths of Sin and Folly? *Christ* is my King, and will be my Judge; * *to this End he died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord, both of the Dead and Living.* Now, how have I obey'd his Authority? Have his Ordinances and Institutions met with my hearty Submission? Do I follow his *Example*, † *who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth?* Am I truly conformed to the great *Ends of his Life and Death*, in dying to Sin, and living to Righteousness? And am I healed by his *Stripes*? If, on these Enquiries, we have the Answer of a good Conscience, we may rejoice: If, on the other Hand, Conscience condemns, let us *amend our Ways, and our Doings*; ‡ *Let us search and try our Ways, and turn again unto the Lord.*

II. Is the Hope of Favour with God, the Privilege and Happiness of the *Righteous*? let us thence beware, lest we build on a false Foundation, and *hope* in vain. Let neither the Faith of our Parents, the Righteousness of our Friends, nor the external Shew of our own Devotions, deceive us; for even the Mercy of God, and the Undertakings of Christ, will fail, all the while we are disobedient, unrighteous, and workers of Iniquity.

'Tis an easy Matter to persuade a bad Man to roul himself on Christ, and desire to be cloathed with his Submission and Duty to God;

* *Rom.* xiv. 9.† *1 Pet.* ii. 24.‡ *Lam.* iii. 40.

but who can possibly think, that the Obedience of one Person can be placed to the Account of another, who, as to himself, abides disobedient? as well may Wisdom, or Patience, or Humility, be convey'd from one Subject to another. He only that *doeth righteously* can, in any Sense, be esteemed * *righteous* in the Sight of God, who can neither be deceived or mocked. Indeed, when *Christ is formed in us*, and the *Life we now live in the Flesh* is influenced and governed by *the Faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us*; when we are *led by the Spirit of God, we are then his Children, and Heirs with Christ* of the Glory to come.

III. Are the Hopes and Views of good Men and Women, so *very* great and desirable? Let us thence encourage our Souls in steadily practising the several Virtues of a righteous Life; let us labour to encrease in Faith, in Diligence, in Zeal, and Love to Christ; let us add to our present Degrees of Faith, the practical Graces of Christianity: by abounding therein, we make our Calling and Election sure; our Hope in God, through Christ, becomes firm and lasting; 'twill stand us in Stead, at Death, and in the Day of Judgment; 'twill be as an Anchor to our Souls, and secure our Entrance into that Place within the Veil, where Christ, for us, is already entered. Running, with Patience, the Race

* 1 John iii. 7.

Race set before us, we may securely look unto Jesus, as the Author and End of Faith: By building up ourselves on our most holy Profession, and praying in the Holy Ghost, we keep ourselves in the Love of God, and safely look for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto Eternal Life.

You now expect I should give some further Account of our departed Friend and Brother. Though Virtue usually speaks for itself, yet something is most justly due to an excellent and worthy Character. The Deceased had the Advantage and Happiness of being trained up, *from a Child, to the Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*; he was betimes seasoned with the *Wisdom of Salvation*, through the steady Care and holy Example of his pious Father. Had all Parents the like Capacity, Zeal, and Steadiness, the Generations of Mankind could never have sunk into that Ignorance and Folly so apparent in the World. Being thus disposed to Religion and Virtue, to the Knowledge of God in Christ, those early Impressions had their constant and steady Influence; so as that in the Days of his Youth our Friend took upon himself the solemn Profession of Christianity, by that Baptism appointed in the Gospel, as the visible Mark and Evidence of our Entrance into the Church of God, purchased by the Redeemer's Blood. Being well established in the Foundation Principles *of the Doctrine of Christ*, on these 'twas his constant Endeavour to build
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up *unto Perfection*; in these Principles he remained steadfast and immoveable, knowing that *Jesus Christ*, or his Religion, *is the same Yesterday, to Day, and forever*. Giving himself up thus to the Christian Life and Practice, his profiting soon and manifestly appeared.

The Death of his pious Father engaged him *early* on the Stage of Action with respect to the present World. Here, though setting out under some Disadvantages, yet, by constant Prudence, even Conduct, and indefatigable Application, through the Divine Blessing which usually succeeds the diligent Hand, he became very successful and prosperous; truly capable, and heartily willing, to serve his Generation according to the Will of God. Were we to trace him in the several Stations through which he passed, (a Task of Time and Pains) he would be found of singular Excellence, and worthy of perpetual Respect and Imitation. The kind Husband, the tender Parent, the useful Neighbour, the exact Dealer, the faithful, compassionate Friend, in him, were all conspicuous.

Nor can we forget him as a Minister of God, in the Gospel of his Son. His Place and Station in the Church, equally declare his uncommon Capacity, and unwearied Diligence; willing to *spend, and be spent*, in the Redeemer's Cause, and for the good of Souls; he was, *in Journeyings often*; spared neither
Time,

Time, Expence, nor Pains, in visiting the Members of Christ, in any Part of the Nation; either, where Gifts were wanting, Differences were unreconciled, or Disorders appeared, needing a proper Remedy. He may be very fairly numbered among *the Messengers of the Churches and the Glory of Christ*. His great Success, in these kinds of Service, gave him much Encouragement; and his Presence was often and greatly desired. His Spirit was so intent on this Work; as was the Case of *Timothy*, who is said, *naturally to care for the good Estate of his Philippians*, that the *Care of the Churches*, soon become, as one may say, *natural*, i. e. easy and familiar to him.

You, my good Friends of this Congregation, need not, so much as to be reminded, how he *watched for your Souls, as one who must give Account*, so as to do it *with Joy and not with Grief*. How ready was he to consult Methods for your spiritual Profit, and how unwearied in their Execution? How much was it his Care and Study, *to warn the unruly, to comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak?* And thus, by a Life, suitable to what he *taught you publickly, and from House to House*, did he, adorn the Doctrine of God his Saviour. I fear not to say, in a qualified Sense, *ye are Witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, he behaved himself among you that believe.* You lament the loss of

a Life so valuable ; but you cannot *sorrow as those who have no Hope*. To the faithful Servants of Christ, even Death is gainful. *Blessed are the Dead, who die in the Lord*, I repeat it here, *Yea, saith the Spirit, they rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them* to their unspeakable Joy and Comfort. Since then, the Righteous hath, thus, Hope even in Death ; and since our Brother, so well supported that excellent Character ; Labour to rejoice in the Light and Grace you have received, through his Ministry and good Example. Learn truly to value, and constantly attend upon, the Gifts which still remain among you ; strengthen their Hands, and encourage their Ministrations, to the utmost of your Power. Let the Word of the Lord, and the Ordinances of his House, be still precious to you. Keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace : Labour to *be perfect, be of good Comfort, live in Peace, and the God of Love and Peace, will remain with you*. To such of you, as were still more immediately related to him by the Ties of Nature : I can only say ; study Resignation to the Will of Providence : 'Tis not long e'er you, and all of us must follow : *In Patience possess your Souls* ; Bless God for the Advantages you enjoy by his past Life. Copy his Example in every Excellence of it ; Trust in God ; live before him to his Praise : *By Prayer and Supplication ; with Thanksgiving,*
make

make your Requests known to the Lord; and the Peace of God, passing all understanding, will keep your Hearts and Minds through Jesus Christ. In one Word, since Life is short, and Death so certain; let us, one and all, as the Prophet speaks, prepare the Materials for our removing, by laying up Treasure in Heaven; let us learn, more and more, to live as it becometh the Gospel, in all holy Conversation and Godliness.

And thus, as Religion and Virtue continue to be our daily Practice, we shall be happy for the present, and enter hereafter into the Joys of our Lord. I conclude with the Words of the Apostle *. *Wherefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, inasmuch as ye know, that your Labour in his Service is not in vain.*

* 1 Cor. xv. 58.

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POST

P O S T S C R I P T.

THAT Maxim favours much of Generosity and Goodness: “ *Of the* “ *Dead say nothing ill.*” To disturb their silent Dust, is, notwithstanding what somtimes happens, through ungrounded Prejudice, or Party-Interest. ’Tis not altogether improbable, but something of this Nature may happen with respect to the Person of whom I have been speaking. Out of the *very many* with whom he had been concerned, both at Home and Abroad, perhaps, some Sparks of Detraction and Inhumanity may appear. I have somtimes seen whole Families censured and condemned *for* the sake of a small Part; though ’tis always a Point of Justice, and Wisdom too, carefully to distinguish the

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the Innocent from the Guilty. 'Tis, with the deepest Concern, I observe so many Complaints from Numbers who so greatly suffer. As we use to say, "Sufferers have a right to complain." But then must not all this have added Weight to the the Father's Affliction, beyond all Measure, to be made a Party therein, when it is so very certain that himself was, along with the rest, a very great Sufferer. Nor can he be justly censured, as accessory by wrong Example: For, I am very sure, Profuseness, or Inattention in Business, could never be learned of him, but the direct contrary.

And as to any criminal Connivances, or Collusions, I am fully satisfied they are not chargeable on him. The knowledge of his Son's Affairs, as they became more and more desperate, was unduly kept from him, even till he was incapable to alter them. I must confess some of the Things complained, of are a little intricate, and not easily seen through, by such as are unacquainted with Trade and Merchandize. Some Cases, though clear, and practised every Day by Men of Business, without the least Reflection, may appear to others,

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in a different Light ; and so be easily improved to a Person's Disadvantage. Of this, I am pretty well satisfied, had he not been a Father, or one concerned in the Family Interest, those Charges had never been thought of, which have been of late the most loudly proclaimed and aggravated. I acknowledge and regret, the heavy Losses, under which some Persons labour, whom I greatly respect : And yet I know not how to help thinking, that, so far as the Father was accidentally brought into the Account, they themselves would have taken the same Course, and have excused themselves on the established Principles of Negotiation.

After all, I can sincerely say, that, from almost forty Years Acquaintance ; from the closest Conversation ; from the most intimate Correspondence, and the nicest Observation, I never observed in him, so much as an Inclination, to do what was unjust. We know the Hearts of Men, only by their Actions : By these they stand or fall : And so far, I take it, Experience and general Observation will defend him.

And what fully convinces me of his Innocence, besides his pious Education, and daily Practice,

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Practice ; is this, *that under the Extremity of Pain, and the Expectation of near approaching Death, he solemnly protested " that the " Censures passed upon him were utterly false and unjust."* And his other Profession, respecting his religious and ministerial Conduct, will, I believe, be readily admitted as a real Truth, that, *" he had not made Gain of " Godliness ;"* but, on the contrary, it was his Care and Study, by his own *Labour and Travel, to make the Gospel of Christ without any Charge.* The rack of his Distemper *, prevented many seasonable Admonitions, to those about him ; in which Work, being well qualified, he was never sparing. As, *for him to live,* was advantageous to the Cause of *Christ ; so, to die,* was gain to himself.

* An Inflammation in his Bowels, was the Occasion of his Death.

F I N I S.



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